
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 803

AN ACT CONCERNING ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAMS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF OYSTER HARVESTERS.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and Department of Public Health (DPH) to study, respectively, (1) the development of entrepreneurial programs for young oyster harvesters and (2) the public health effects of eating certain eastern oysters. The departments must report to the legislative committees of cognizance by July 1, 2015.

The bill appropriates \$50,000 to DECD from the General Fund for FY 14 to complete its study.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

DECD STUDY

The bill requires DECD to study the development of entrepreneurial programs for the “next generation” of oyster harvesters in the waters between and around the Thimble Islands and those near the Pawson Park area, which are waters off of Branford. The study must include evaluating the number of young oyster harvesters and whether it is feasible for them to establish a business in that location.

Under the bill, DECD must report by July 1, 2015 to the Commerce and Environment committees. The report must evaluate the study and recommend whether to develop a pilot or permanent program to develop entrepreneurial programs for young harvesters. If DECD recommends developing a program, it must give the Department of Transportation (DOT) a copy of the report. The bill requires DOT, within 60 days after receiving a copy, to comment on the feasibility of developing such a program.

DPH STUDY

The bill requires DPH to study the public health effects of eating eastern oysters that are between two and three inches long. (Current law sets the minimum size for harvesting oysters at three inches long (CGS § 26-234b)). DPH must, by July 1, 2015, report its study results to the Commerce, Environment, and Public Health committees.

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The Senate referred the bill (File 61), which dealt with aquaculture job growth, to the Energy and Technology Committee, which reported a substitute bill with the current provisions.

Related Bill

sSB 805 (File 479), reported favorably by the Environment Committee, reduces, from three to two inches long, the size of eastern oysters that can be taken from Connecticut waters.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 17 Nay 11 (03/04/2013)

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 20 Nay 0 (04/18/2013)